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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Political Situation in South Vietnam
(As of 12:00 Noon)

1. In a conversation with a US Embassy official, Buddhist Institute official Ho Giac today declared that recent government actions satisfy Buddhist demands. Giac said that Institute members meeting earlier today are content to allow the Ky government to continue in office until an elected government is established, and that they intended to send a delegation to I Corps to convince Buddhists there to go along with their decision. However, Giac indicated that the constitutional convention--which is to be elected within three to five months--should determine the form of government to hold power from the time the convention opens until a civilian government is established. Thus far, the military government has agreed to hold elections within three to five months for a constitutional convention whose only duty would be to draft a constitution.

2. Although the decision by the Buddhists this morning will apparently lead to an easing of tensions in Saigon for the time being, the government still faces considerable problems in I Corps. According to press reports, militant Tri Quang, whose influence is particularly strong in central Vietnam, attended the Institute meeting today. Although Ho Giac has declared that some monks will go to I Corps to calm restive elements, it remains to be seen whether Quang himself will use his considerable influence to effect any real change in the situation there.

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3. Meanwhile, non-religious elements of the struggle movement in I Corps today stated their continued opposition to the Saigon government. In Da Nang, former I Corps commander General Thi told newsmen that "there must be an immediate change in government--and that--demonstrations will continue in this area." This is the first time that General Thi has publicly announced his association with the struggle movement. Nguyen Van Man, the controversial mayor of Da Nang, also spoke out against the Ky government. Although demonstrations in the city have subsided somewhat, unconfirmed reports suggest that anti-government elements are continuing to expand their influence. [redacted] the struggle forces now have their own "people's police force," and are considering the establishment of "people's courts." In Hue, student broadcasts over the municipal radio today also reflected continuing opposition to the Saigon government.

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